

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

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ABMC - COL. BADGER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: MILI, MX

SUBJECT AMERICAN CEMETERY

REF: MEXICO 6429

1. THE DEPARTMENT AND ABMC AGREE THAT AN EARLY SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE AMERICAN CEMETERY IN MEXICO CITY IS DESIRABLE.

2. IT IS ABMCS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE GOM ELIMINATED THE IDEA OF A THIRD PARTY SUCH AS THE AMERICAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY BEING USED AS AGENT OR OWNER OF REAL ESTATE TO WHICH THE CEMETERY COULD BE MOVED BY STATING THAT TAXES, DUTIES, ETC., MUST BE PAID AS FOR ANY PRIVATE OPERATIONS. HOWEVER, EVEN IF THE GOM DID NOT OBJECT TO THE PROPOSAL, THE AMERICAN BENEVOLENT SOCIETY CEMETERY IS UNSUITABLE FOR THIS USE. IN ADDITION, IT APPEARS THAT AN UNAVOIDABLE LONG DELAY WOULD OCCUR IN FINDING AN ORGANIZATION WILLING TO PERFORM THE THIRD PARTY FUNCTION, LOCATING AND PURCHASING SUITABLE PROPERTY, SOLVING VARIOUS LEGAL PROBLEMS AND FINALLY MOVING THE CEMETERY. GIVEN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THE DEPARTMENT AND ABMC BELIEVE THE BEST OPTION AVAILABLE TO US IS TO REMAIN IN PLACE IN THE

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REDUCED AREA.

3. THE ABMC ENGINEER AND ARCHITECT ARE NOW IN THE FINAL STAGES OF COMPLETING THE PRELIMINARY DESIGNS TO RECONFIGURE THE CEMETERY WITHIN THE REDUCED SPACE REMAINING AFTER 14.5 METERS HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM THE WEST SIDE. HOWEVER, THE FINAL DECISION TO REMAIN AT THE PRESENT SITE IS DEPENDENT UPON APPROVAL BY THE FULL COMMISSION, THIS DECISION IS EXPECTED WITHIN 3 OR 4 WEEKS. AFTER APPROVAL BY THE COMMISSION, A CONTRACT WILL BE AWARDED FOR AN ARCHITECT TO PREPARE FINAL DESIGN AND COST ESTIMATES. SEE GENERAL ADAMS LETTER OF 12 JULY TO GILLESPIE FOR TIME ESTIMATES.

4. AT THE EMBASSY'S DISCRETION, IT MAY INFORM THE FOREIGN OFFICE OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE ABMC WILL CHOOSE TO REMAIN AT THE PRESENT LOCATION EVEN THOUGH THIS WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE EXPENDITURE FOR THE REINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS AND RECONFIGURATION OF THE CEMETERY IN AN AREA OF REDUCED SIZE. YOU MAY INDICATE TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE THAT THE USG LOOKS TO THE GOM FOR COMPENSATION FOR THE PROPERTY TAKEN WHICH IS ADEQUATE TO PROVIDE FOR A SUITABLY ATTRACTIVE AND DIGNIFIED CEMETERY. AFTER WE HAVE AN ESTIMATE OF THE COST OF RECONFIGURATION, WE WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS IN DETAIL WITH THE GOM THE QUESTION OF COMPENSATION. KISSINGER

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